

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 079909
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 PA-01 ISO-00 H-01
SSM-03 SIG-03 EB-08 SP-02 /064 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:LHW
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
PA/PRESS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

-----017523 290217Z /66

O 290101Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
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PAGE 02 STATE 079909

AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR

JCS WASHDC 0000
DOD WASHDC
CIA WASHDC 0000
USIA
NSC WASHDC 0000

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD; TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 28

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 28,
1978. FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS JOHN
TRATTNER.

Q. THERE IS A REPORT THAT PRIME MINISTER BEGIN SENT
PRESIDENT SADAT A LETTER VIA THE U.S. EMBASSIES IN TEL AVIV
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PAGE 03 STATE 079909

AND CAIRO. CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT, AND CAN YOU TELL US NOW
WHAT ROLE THE UNITED STATES IS PLAYING IN THIS WHOLE
SEQUENCE?

A. WE HAVE READ THE SAME REPORTS THAT YOU HAVE ON THAT,
BUT I HAVE NOTHING FOR YOU IN THAT RESPECT TODAY.

Q. YOU MEAN THERE WAS NO LETTER OR YOU ARE NOT TALKING
ABOUT IT IF THERE WAS OR WHAT?

A. I AM SAYING THAT I HAVE NOTHING FOR YOU TODAY.

NOW, TO GO ON TO ANSWER THE OTHER PART OF YOUR QUES-
TION, WE NATURALLY SUPPORT ANY MOVE WHICH WOULD ADVANCE
THE PEACE PROCESS.

I AM NOT TALKING SO MUCH ABOUT THE REPORTED LETTER
THAT YOU ASKED ME ABOUT AS A REPORT OF ISRAELI EFFORTS TO
RE-OPEN DISCUSSIONS WITH EGYPT.

OUR ROLE, WHICH IS BEING PLAYED AT THE REQUEST OF THE
PARTIES, IS DIRECTED TOWARD THAT END OF ADVANCING THE
PEACE PROCESS. OUR POSITION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT DIRECT
CONTACTS BETWEEN THE PARTIES ARE DESIRABLE WHEREVER AND
WHENEVER POSSIBLE. WHETHER SUCH CONTACTS ARE POSSIBLE

NOW AT THIS PARTICULAR POINT REMAINS FOR THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO DECIDE.

Q. WE ARE NOT ASKING ABOUT THE CONTENT. DO YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW WHETHER THE EMBASSIES TRANSMITTED A MESSAGE?

A. I AM NOT SAYING I DIDN'T KNOW. I AM SAYING, AND I WILL REPEAT IT AGAIN, THAT I HAVE NOTHING TO GIVE YOU ON IT TODAY.

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PAGE 04 STATE 079909

Q. IS THAT BECAUSE YOU WERE ASKED BY THE PARTIES NOT TO DISCUSS YOUR MEETING?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO SAY. I AM NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU REASONS WHY I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FOR YOU TODAY. I AM JUST NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU ANYTHING TODAY.

Q. THE ISRAELI RADIO BROADCAST A FORMULATION BY THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT ON THE PALESTINIANS THAT SEEMS TO APPROACH ELEMENTS OF THE ASWAN FORMULA. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT?

A. ON THAT PARTICULAR ITEM YOU HAVE THE PRESIDENT'S ASWAN LANGUAGE. THAT REPRESENTS OUR IDEAS ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. NOW, IT IS GOING TO BE UP TO YOU YOURSELVES TO JUDGE THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THAT LANGUAGE AND OTHER FORMULATIONS THAT MIGHT BE PRESENTED. I AM NOT GOING TO. I CANNOT GET INTO A PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF THESE FORMULATIONS AS THEY PERTAIN TO THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

Q. YOU DON'T WANT TO SAY WHETHER THAT REPRESENTS A MOVE FORWARD OR A MOVE IN ANY DIRECTION?

A. THE FORMULATION HAS BEEN PART OF THE NEGOTIATIONS THAT GREW OUT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE

POLITICAL COMMITTEE IN JANUARY IN JERUSALEM. IT IS A PART OF THOSE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT BEYOND THAT I REALLY CAN'T TAKE YOU.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE POSSIBILITY THAT FOREIGN

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PAGE 05 STATE 079909

MINISTER DAYAN MIGHT BE COMING BACK SOON TO WASHINGTON TO RESUME DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION? THERE WAS

SUCH A REPORT IN THE ISRAELI PRESS TODAY.

A. I HAVEN'T SEEN THAT, BUT I HAVE NOT HEARD OF ANY PLANS FOR HIM TO COME BACK.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY INDICATION FROM DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER YADIN'S STATEMENT YESTERDAY THAT THERE IS A RETHINKING IN ISRAEL ABOUT THEIR POSITION ON 242 AND THE WEST BANK?

A. WHETHER OR NOT WE HAVE ANY FEELINGS ABOUT IT, I REALLY WOULD RATHER NOT ELABORATE UP HERE. I THINK IT IS PREMATURE AND IN ANY CASE NOT UP TO ME TO GET INTO IT AT THIS MOMENT.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY REACTION TO THE REPORT YESTERDAY THAT ISRAEL, THAT MR. BEGIN SUBMITTED A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS TO PRESIDENT CARTER WHICH THE PRESIDENT REJECTED?

A. NO. I DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT.

Q. DID MR. BEGIN SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO THE PRESIDENT?

A. I THINK THAT IS SOMETHING WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO DESCRIBE FOR YOU BEFORE, AND I AM STILL IN THAT POSITION.

Q. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME REPORTS ON THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON AND THERE HAS BEEN SOME DOUBTS ON THAT. DO YOU HAVE ANY ASSURANCES FROM THE ISRAELIS THAT THEY WILL WITHDRAW FULLY FROM LEBANON?

A. I SAID YESTERDAY THAT OUR INFORMATION WAS THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME THINNING OUT OF ISRAELI FORCES. THAT STILL REMAINS OUR JUDGMENT OF THE SITUATION.

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PAGE 06 STATE 079909

Q. BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO ASSURANCES FROM THEM THAT THEY WILL WITHDRAW?

A. I THINK THAT I WOULD HAVE TO REFER YOU TO WHAT THEY HAVE SAID PUBLICLY ABOUT THAT.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT 242, AS TO WHETHER OR NOT OUR POSITION, THE U.S. POSITION, HAS CHANGED OVER THE PAST YEAR. HOW DO WE STAND? HOW DO WE DEFINE 242?

A. WE HAVE SAID IT MANY TIMES. I AM NOT GOING TO GET INTO IT AGAIN NOW. WE JUST WENT OVER IT AT SOME LENGTH.

Q. THE POINT IS THAT YESTERDAY, AS I UNDERSTAND YOUR REMARKS, MINOR ADJUSTMENTS, INSUBSTANTIAL CHANGES AS THE

ROGERS' PLAN HAD IT, ARE NO LONGER BEING USED BY THE
ADMINISTRATION. DOES THAT MEAN THAT THEY ARE NO LONGER
VALID, THAT THIS PHRASE IS NO LONGER BEING USED BY THE
UNITED STATES, THAT IT IS NO LONGER OPERATIVE, SHOULD WE
SAY? WHERE DO WE STAND ON THIS?

A. WHERE WE STAND, AS I WILL REPEAT TO YOU AGAIN--AND
I AM NOT GOING TO GO BEYOND IT OR INTO IT ANY FURTHER
THAN THAT, HAS BEEN SAID MANY TIMES AND I THINK IT SHOULD
BE CLEAR TO EVERYBODY. THEREFORE, I AM JUST NOT GOING TO
GET INTO IT.

Q. BUT YOU ARE NOT SAYING THAT MINOR ADJUSTMENTS REMAINS
A CRITERION?

A. I AM NOT SAYING ANYTHING. WHAT NEEDS TO BE SAID ON IT
HAS BEEN SAID.

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PAGE 07 STATE 079909

Q. YES, I KNOW, BUT WHY ARE YOU RELUCTANT TO REDEFINE IT
TODAY IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT MINOR ADJUSTMENTS HAS NOT
BEEN USED BY THIS ADMINISTRATION OVER THE PAST SEVERAL
MONTHS, SHALL WE SAY?

A. I AM RELUCTANT TO DEFINE IT, AND I'LL GO ON BACK-
GROUND HERE BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO BE THE SUBJECT OF NEWS
STORIES WHICH PRETEND THAT SOME PART OF U.S. POLIC
<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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